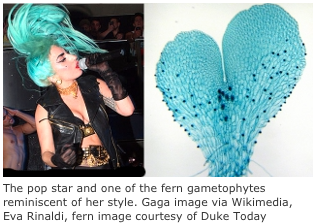
Meet the Lady Gaga Ferns - **Culturally conscious researchers name a new plant genus after the reigning queen of pop.** By Bob Grant | October 26, 2012

Duke University researchers continue a long and storied tradition of naming newly discovered or reclassified species after their favorite musicians by christening a genus of ferns containing 19 separate species *Gaga*. The genus includes two species entirely new to science—*Gaga germanotta* and *Gaga monstraparva*.

"We wanted to name this genus for Lady Gaga because of her fervent defense of equality and individual expression," said Duke biologist Kathleen Pryer told [*Wired Science*](http://www.wired.com/wiredscience/2012/10/lady-gaga-fern/). "And as we started to consider it, the ferns themselves gave us more reasons why it was a good choice."

The ferns contain the nitrogenous base sequence GAGA in their DNA, and a brightly colored stage of the ferns’ reproductive cycle, called the gametophyte, is reminiscent of one of Gaga's elaborate stage costumes.

Furthermore, "the biology of these ferns is exceptionally obscure and blurred by sexual crossing between species," Pryer told [*Duke Today*](http://today.duke.edu/2012/10/gagafern). "They have high numbers of chromosomes and asexuality that can lead to offspring that are genetically identical to the parent plant." Gaga, an outspoken supporter of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) rights, was a perfect fit for the ferns, she said. "We think that [Gaga's] second album, *Born This Way*, is enormously empowering, especially for disenfranchised people and communities like LGBT, ethnic groups, women—and scientists who study odd ferns!"

New ID for Dingoes - **Once thought to be feral dogs, dingoes are actually a separate species from their domesticated dogs** By Kerry Grens | April 2, 2014

Dingoes, often thought of as wild dogs, are actually their own group of predator, scientists proclaimed in the [*Journal of Zoology*](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jzo.12134/abstract) last week (March 27). “We can also conclusively say that the dingo is a distinctive Australian wild *canid* or member of the dog family in its own right, separate from dogs and wolves,” coauthor Mathew Crowther of the University of Sydney said in a [press release](http://newsroom.unsw.edu.au/news/science/dingo-distinct-species). “The appropriate scientific classification is *Canis dingo,* as they appear not to be descended from wolves, are distinct from dogs and are not a subspecies.”

Dingoes are thought to have descended from domesticated dogs in East Asia. They were introduced to Australia several thousand years ago and bred in isolation for millenia.

To get a sense of what pure dingoes looked like, compared to dingo-dog hybrids, Crowther and his colleagues examined 69 dingo skulls from museum specimens dating back to at least 1900, along with a handful of skin specimens. Back then, it was unlikely the animals would have bred with domesticated dogs. The researchers established a benchmark for dingo features that differ from those of the typical dog: a wider head, longer snout, and shorter skull height.

Crowther said the proper identification of dingoes has practical applications, because policies in Australia support the conservation of dingoes but the extermination of hybrids. According to [Reuters](http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/04/01/us-australia-dingo-idUKBREA300G620140401), “the scientists think there are still pure dingoes in parts of Australia, [coauthor Mike Letnic of the University of New South Wales] said, but without having the DNA from these old animals, they cannot be 100 percent sure.”

New ID for Dingoes - **Once thought to be feral dogs, dingoes are actually a separate species from their domesticated dogs** By Kerry Grens | April 2, 2014

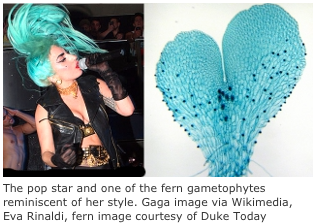
Dingoes, often thought of as wild dogs, are actually their own group of predator, scientists proclaimed in the [*Journal of Zoology*](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jzo.12134/abstract) last week (March 27). “We can also conclusively say that the dingo is a distinctive Australian wild *canid* or member of the dog family in its own right, separate from dogs and wolves,” coauthor Mathew Crowther of the University of Sydney said in a [press release](http://newsroom.unsw.edu.au/news/science/dingo-distinct-species). “The appropriate scientific classification is *Canis dingo,* as they appear not to be descended from wolves, are distinct from dogs and are not a subspecies.”

Dingoes are thought to have descended from domesticated dogs in East Asia. They were introduced to Australia several thousand years ago and bred in isolation for millenia.

To get a sense of what pure dingoes looked like, compared to dingo-dog hybrids, Crowther and his colleagues examined 69 dingo skulls from museum specimens dating back to at least 1900, along with a handful of skin specimens. Back then, it was unlikely the animals would have bred with domesticated dogs. The researchers established a benchmark for dingo features that differ from those of the typical dog: a wider head, longer snout, and shorter skull height.

Crowther said the proper identification of dingoes has practical applications, because policies in Australia support the conservation of dingoes but the extermination of hybrids. According to [Reuters](http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/04/01/us-australia-dingo-idUKBREA300G620140401), “the scientists think there are still pure dingoes in parts of Australia, [coauthor Mike Letnic of the University of New South Wales] said, but without having the DNA from these old animals, they cannot be 100 percent sure.”

Meet the Lady Gaga Ferns - **Culturally conscious researchers name a new plant genus after the reigning queen of pop.** By Bob Grant | October 26, 2012

Duke University researchers continue a long and storied tradition of naming newly discovered or reclassified species after their favorite musicians by christening a genus of ferns containing 19 separate species *Gaga*. The genus includes two species entirely new to science—*Gaga germanotta* and *Gaga monstraparva*.

"We wanted to name this genus for Lady Gaga because of her fervent defense of equality and individual expression," said Duke biologist Kathleen Pryer told [*Wired Science*](http://www.wired.com/wiredscience/2012/10/lady-gaga-fern/). "And as we started to consider it, the ferns themselves gave us more reasons why it was a good choice."

The ferns contain the nitrogenous base sequence GAGA in their DNA, and a brightly colored stage of the ferns’ reproductive cycle, called the gametophyte, is reminiscent of one of Gaga's elaborate stage costumes.

Furthermore, "the biology of these ferns is exceptionally obscure and blurred by sexual crossing between species," Pryer told [*Duke Today*](http://today.duke.edu/2012/10/gagafern). "They have high numbers of chromosomes and asexuality that can lead to offspring that are genetically identical to the parent plant." Gaga, an outspoken supporter of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) rights, was a perfect fit for the ferns, she said. "We think that [Gaga's] second album, *Born This Way*, is enormously empowering, especially for disenfranchised people and communities like LGBT, ethnic groups, women—and scientists who study odd ferns!"